

**Provincial elections; Centralization or Decentralization,
With an emphasis on South Khorasan province Electorates**

Ghassem Akbari ¹

Omran Rasti ²

Javad Mikaniki ³

Abstract

The issue of designing and selection of an optimal and efficient electoral system has always been a matter of concern and important discussion among experts in the field of electoral geography and officials, and scholars and experts in this field have put forward various theories hereof.

In this regard, in our country (Iran), provincial parliamentary elections plan has been raised at different periods in the parliament nearly two decades, and it has been an arena for confrontation of arguments of proponents and opponents of this project. The designers of this plan, by changing the scope and scale of the current level of city electorates to the province electorates try to achieve goals such as: improving the quality level of Parliament, promoting the culture of partisanship, increasing the participation rate of citizens and political parties in the elections, reduction of electoral violations such as vote buying and Jerry Mandring, reducing violently sectarian and ethnic rivalries and ultimately achieving a more equitable electoral system.

Despite the advantages and benefits cited by proponents, also many disadvantages and shortcomings have been proposed by the opponents that

1. MA in Political Geography of Birjand University. gh.akbari10@gmail.com

2. Assistant Professor of political Geography of Birjand University. orasti@birjand.ac.ir

3. Associate Professor of Rural Planning Geography of Birjand University. javadmikaniki@birjand.ac.ir

each one is considerable in its place and shows that contrary to good and fair goals, this plan will be followed by numerous negative and sometimes unfair consequences.

This paper, with a descriptive-analytical approach, investigates one aspect of the consequences of this plan on centralization and decentralization in the provinces. Analysis of the findings of this study indicate that despite the claims and goals of designers and proponents, the provincial elections plan will cause the aggravation of centralization at the national and provincial level, isolation of sparsely populated and marginal areas and reduction of participation rate of these areas in election, especially parliamentary elections. Analysis and comparing the weight of the votes of the electorates of South Khorasan province represents egregious predominance of Birjand and Qaenat cities, especially the city of Birjand on other regions and electorates of the province which in case of provincial elections, sharp focus and attention of all candidates on this city and defeat of the other electorates against its high weight, in addition to intensification of centralization, according to the provincial ethnic distribution, will result in tensions.

Key Words: Centralization, Decentralization, The provincial parliamentary elections plan, South Khorasan Province.